

The primary sense considered in speech is hearing. The ear is possibly the sense most susceptible to training. The improvement of hearing as an agent of attention is not difficult. A small amount of study will show wonderful results; yet it is frequently neglected. Many people have poor speech and a poor method of reading because they have never trained the ear to help in thinking.

We'll build us a nest in the old apple-tree,
'Mid the blossoms of pink and of white;
Where the bee will come with her hum-hum-hum,
And the bumble-bee 'll drone with his bum-bum-bum.
Here the stars will look down 'twixt the leaves at night,
Look down from the sky on you and on me.

Can you read these lines, giving the "hum" of the honey-bee among the apple blossoms on one pitch, and then the bumble-bee's sound with another note, as you have heard him make it? What is the chief difference?

How many of the sounds or songs referred to in these lines come to you in reading? Do you both hear and see in your mind?

MARCH

March, March, March! They are coming
In troops to the tune of the wind, —
Red headed woodpeckers drumming,
Gold crested thrushes behind.
Sparrows in brown jackets hopping
Past every gateway and door;
Finches with crimson caps stopping
Just where they stopped years before.

March, March, March! They are slipping
Into their places at last, —
Little white lily-buds dripping
Under the showers that fall fast;
Buttercups, violets, roses,
Snowdrop and bluebell and pink, —
Throng upon throng of sweet posies
Bending the dew drops to drink.

March, March, March! They will hurry
Forth at the wild bugle-sound, —
Blossoms and birds in a flurry
Fluttering all over the ground.

Hang out your flags, birch and willow,
Shake out your red tassels, larch;
Grass-blades, up from your earth pillow;
Hear who is calling you, March!

Lucy Larcom

One of the best means of improving the ear is attention to the songs of birds. The quality of their songs is quite varied. The melodies are more difficult, but anyone can easily learn to tell birds by their songs.

The following poem on "The Pewee," by J. T. Trowbridge, especially inspires one to study birds. Mr. John Burroughs writes of it: "Trowbridge, as a rule, keeps very close to the natural history of his own country when he has occasion to draw material from this source, and to American nature generally. You will find in his poems, the wood pewee, the bluebird, the oriole, the robin, the grouse, the kingfisher, the chipmunk, the mink, the bobolink, the wood thrush, all in their proper places. There are few bird-poems that combine so much good poetry and good natural history as his 'Pewee.'"

THE PEWEE

The listening Dryads hushed the woods;
The boughs were thick, and thin and few
The golden ribbons fluttering through;
Their sun-embroidered, leafy hoods
The lindens lifted to the blue:
Only a little forest-brook
The farthest hem of silence shook:
When in the hollow shades I heard, —
Was it a spirit, or a bird?
Or, strayed from Eden, desolate,
Some Peri calling to her mate,
Whom nevermore her mate would cheer?
"Pe-ri! pe-ri! peer!"

Through rocky clefts the brooklet fell
With plashy pour, that scarce was sound,
But only quiet less profound,
A stillness fresh and audible:
A yellow leaflet to the ground
Whirled noiselessly: with wing of gloss
A hovering sunbeam brushed the moss,

And, wavering brightly over it,
 Sat like a butterfly alit:
 The owlet in his open door
 Stared roundly: while the breezes bore
 The plaint to far-off places drear, —
 "Pe-ree! pe-ree! peer!"

To trace it in its green retreat
 I sought among the boughs in vain;
 And followed still the wandering strain,
 So melancholy and so sweet
 The dim-eyed violets yearned with pain.
 'T was now a sorrow in the air,
 Some nymph's immortalized despair
 Haunting the woods and waterfalls;
 And now, at long, sad intervals,
 Sitting unseen in dusky shade,
 His plaintive pipe some fairy played,
 With long-drawn cadence thin and clear, —
 "Pe-wee! Pe-wee! peer!"

Long-drawn and clear its closes were, —
 As if the hand of Music through
 The sombre robe of Silence drew
 A thread of golden gossamer:
 So pure a flute the fairy blew.
 Like beggared princes of the wood,
 In silver rags the birches stood;
 The hemlocks, lordly counsellors,
 Were dumb; the sturdy servitors,
 In beechen jackets patched and gray,
 Seemed waiting spellbound all the day
 That low, entrancing note to hear, —
 "Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

I quit the search, and sat me down
 Beside the brook, irresolute,
 And watched a little bird in suit
 Of sober olive, soft and brown,
 Perched in the maple-branches, mute:
 With greenish gold its vest was fringed,
 Its tiny cap was ebon-tinged,
 With ivory pale its wings were barred,
 And its dark eyes were tender-starred.
 "Dear bird," I said, "what is thy name?"
 And thrice the mournful answer came,
 So faint and far, and yet so near, —
 "Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

For so I found my forest bird, —
 The pewee of the loneliest woods,
 Sole singer in these solitudes,
 Which never robin's whistle stirred,
 Where never bluebird's plume intrudes.
 Quick darting through the dewy morn,
 The redstart trilled his twittering horn,
 And vanished in thick boughs: at even,
 Like liquid pearls fresh showered from heaven,
 The high notes of the lone wood-thrush
 Fall on the forest's holy hush:
 But thou all day complainest here, —
 "Pe-wee! pe-wee! peer!"

Hast thou, too, in thy little breast,
 Strange longings for a happier lot, —
 For love, for life, thou know'st not what, —
 A yearning, and a vague unrest,
 For something still which thou hast not? —
 Thou soul of some benighted child
 That perished, crying in the wild!
 Or lost, forlorn, and wandering maid,
 By love allured, by love betrayed,
 Whose spirit with her latest sigh
 Arose, a little winged cry,
 Above her chill and mossy bier!
 "Dear me! dear me! dear!"

Ah, no such piercing sorrow mars
 The pewee's life of cheerful ease!
 He sings, or leaves his song to seize
 An insect sporting in the bars
 Of mild bright light that gild the trees:
 A very poet he! For him
 All pleasant places still and dim;
 His heart, a spark of heavenly fire,
 Burns with undying, sweet desire:
 And so he sings; and so his song,
 Though heard not by the hurrying throng,
 Is solace to the pensive ear:
 "Pewee! pewee! peer!"

John Townsend Trowbridge

Study the poem carefully and note the beautiful poetic descriptions. Can you easily picture these and express them with your voice? Really to appreciate the poem will require careful observation of birds in their native surroundings. Persevere and the poem will open a great

world to you. A mastery of the subtleties also implies great training of eye and ear.

THE BROOK

The little brooklet ripples along,
Every bubble singing a song;
It tangles the sun in its crystal skein,
And it answers back to the fretting rain;
Along its margin the ferns unfold,
And violets shapen out of the mold,
And the flag-flower leans, as if fain to snatch
A hint of the brooklet's musical catch,
While arrowheads are wading out
To watch the flashing of silver trout.
Day after day, and night after night,
It seems to be running away out of sight.

But the way is long, and the path is rough,
And day and night are not long enough.
Orion looks on its quivering stream,
His belt and buckle upon it gleam,
And all the stars that haunt the sky
Reflect their splendor in passing by.
Oh, happy brooklet that bears along
The skimming swallow's early song,
The secret of each neighboring nest,
Of lilies anchored on its breast,
That every day, and perhaps forever,
Plays out of doors in all sorts of weather.

Mary N. Prescott

Did you ever follow a brook through the woods and listen to its gurgling, and to its murmuring voices? Do you know all the tones it makes? How different it sounds when it is full of water! Then, have you observed the reflection of the light upon it; of the trees, leaves and flowers around it; or felt the quietness of the deep pool formed when it runs under the bank or eddies into a hollow? Do you appreciate every little clause and reference to the brook as you read this little poem?

TO THE AUTUMN WIND

The wind is whistling through the trees,
It rustles loud among the leaves.
An autumn chill is in the air,
The downy seeds sail everywhere.
O, autumn wind, so cool and strong!
O, autumn wind, we love your song!

The maple leaves, in scarlet dressed,
Are dancing now in wild unrest.
You shake the acorns from on high,
And chase the clouds across the sky.
O, autumn wind, your ways we know!
O, autumn wind, blow high, blow low!

You bring the nuts down from the trees;
You sweep the hills of dry, brown leaves;
The tiny seeds to earth you send —
You are their helper, and their friend.
O, autumn wind, your ways we know!
O, autumn wind, blow high, blow low!

Author not known

Have you ever observed the voices made by the wind? How differently it sings in the different trees in the forest? How it murmurs in the pine tree? How it rustles the leaves of the oak? Have you compared the storm wind and the gentle breeze? The spring wind and the autumn wind? Do you enjoy going out in the wind and listening to its voices? Do you feel how the winds of June seem to blend with the songs of the birds? Do you read a passage like the following with the imaginative realization of its spirit?

GOSSIPS

Deep in the woodland you will hear,
If you but lend attentive ear,
A murmurous talk from time to time,
And all the words will run to rhyme.
By light of sun and light of star,
The wind and trees the gossips are;
In whispers to the questioning trees
The wandering wind tells all he sees,
For he can roam and roam and roam,
While all the trees must stay at home.

"A Boy's Book of Rhyme."

S. W. Browning, Clinton, N. Y., Publisher. By permission.

Clinton Scollard

Keep your eyes and ears always open; enjoy everything that comes; see the beautiful sights and hear the music that sings around us every day. Feel at home in the woods, — not like a stranger who needs to be introduced to every little thing. Careful observation enables us to think more quickly and to understand things better. It wakes us up. It shows a meaning to us when we read poetry. We can

see the things the words represent and enjoy what people say to us and what books tell us.

At first you will not see the need of such a careful study of nature or appreciate the power it will give you in reading, speaking or talking, but persevere, and you will improve in both voice and reading. Finally, there will come a power to enjoy the world that will stay with you forever.

Some may wish to understand more definitely why we should train the eyes and ears and all the senses. The psychological reason is that our minds in receiving impressions in reading have only words to suggest to us objects. Our minds, however, as we read these words act in correspondence with our senses. When you read any of the passages of the preceding pages you have found that your minds awaken and make pictures. Some minds see more readily, others hear; some minds seem to touch things and feel muscular resistance. A normal mind, however, does all these things. The chief reason for the careful observation of nature is to store up in the mind material for such conceptions. The vigorous use of our senses by our minds trains us to create ideas or images when no object is before us. Not only do we remember the things and again see, hear, feel and touch them, but from such exercise another faculty of the mind awakens — a creative power called imagination so that we can conceive new things, things we have never seen or heard.

By varying the actions of our minds we can stimulate this inner thinking energy so that it can act vigorously when we read or speak or write. We not only store up information by studying nature but we quicken our minds into more active life.

VI. LIVING OUR IDEAS

Far in the woods, the fresh green woods in May,
Once sang a bird; but all it found to say
Was "Keep it, keep it!" all the merry day.

The bird? I never saw it, no not I.
I followed, but it flitted far on high;
And "Keep it, keep it!" Echo caught the cry.

I was so glad as through the woods I went
And now I think that "Keep it, keep it!" meant —
"Child, keep each happy thought that heaven has sent."
"Far in the Woods in May." Edith M. Thomas

We are all born with an instinct which makes us feel the life of every little creature around us. This causes us to see things, not as dead or meaningless, but as alive. This insight into the heart of things deepens our lives.

By their actions and voices we judge the motives of people, their characters, and we do not merely stop at this point. Sympathy is awakened and we enjoy trying to think as they think, to act as they act, and to speak as they speak.

Indeed, we go even further. We give words to birds and animals; we represent the way they look and act and weave them into our play and make them sharers of our own life while we also share theirs. This tendency to play that we are crows and foxes is the source of our fables and many of our loveliest stories.

A birdie with a yellow bill
Hopped upon the window sill,
Cocked his shining eye and said:
"Be ashamed, you sleepy-head!"

Robert Louis Stevenson

Without this instinct to feel the life of other creatures, we should never forget ourselves. The little boy would never cross a stick and think he is on a horse — feel it rear and gallop away; the little girl would not cherish her doll and talk to it as if it were a human being, when it is only a rag rolled up. Without this instinct we should never be able to read history and live the lives of people who have done great deeds in the world. It is important, therefore, that we should bring into life and work this play instinct, this spirit of sympathy.

CHERRIES

Under the tree the farmer said,
Smiling and shaking his wise old head:
"Cherries are ripe! but then, you know,
There's the grass to be cut and the corn to hoe;
We can gather the cherries any day,
But when the sun shines we must make our hay;
To-night, when the work has all been done,
We'll muster the boys, for fruit and fun."

Up on the tree a robin said,
 Laughing and shaking his saucy head:
 "Cherries are ripe! and so to-day
 We'll gather them while you make the hay;
 For we are the boys with no corn to hoe,
 No cows to milk, and no grass to mow."
 At night the farmer said: "Here's a trick!
 These roguish robins have had their pick."

[Frederic Edward Weatherley

You can read this poem about "Cherries" in a cold, intellectual way, simply telling the facts, or, on the other hand, you can see the farmer under the tree, smile with him as he shakes "his wise old head," think as he thought, feel as he felt, talk as he talked about the cherries, the grass, and the corn; and you can see the robin also up in the branches, "laughing and shaking his saucy head," and act out his feelings. Then observe how different is your voice in each case. The farmer, too, does not speak in the same way at night.

This instinct about which we have been talking is known as the dramatic instinct. It is alive in all of us in early life, but it is apt to be smothered or crushed out. Upon its spontaneous and free action depends a great deal of the true work in reading which reveals to us the motive and spirit that dominates other people. It enables us to penetrate the character of others and helps us to understand ourselves. It enables us to enjoy the life we live and to enter into sympathy with the world about us.

It enables us also to realize the peculiarities of animals and their likeness to human beings. In the fable we make animals talk as human beings talk. We have the instinct to see either the human motive and character which the animal stands for or the spirit of the animal.

Sometimes we make one animal talk in a kind of monologue fable. Observe how this caterpillar is made to tell of three phases in his life.

"I creep on the ground, and the children say,
 'You ugly old thing,' and push me away.

"I lie in my bed, and the children say,
 'The fellow is dead; we'll throw him away.'

"At last I awake, and the children try
 To make me stay as I rise and fly."

Author not known

Read, with your instinct awake, the story of "The Two Frogs." See everything as they saw it, talk as they talked to each other. Show how each felt when under the delusion that he had seen his goal.

THE TWO FROGS

The cities of Ozaka and Kioto are forty miles apart. The one is the city of canals and bridges: the other is the sacred city of the Mikado's empire, girdled with green hills and a ninefold circle of flowers.

Long ago, there lived two frogs, — one in a well in Kioto, the other in a lotus-pond at Ozaka.

Now it is a proverb in Japan, that "the frog in the well knows not the great ocean;" and the Kioto frog had so often heard this sneer that he resolved to go abroad and see the world, and especially the "great ocean."

"I'll see for myself," said Mr. Frog, as he packed his wallet and wiped his spectacles, "what this great ocean is that they talk about. I do n't believe it is half so deep as my well, where I can see the stars even in daylight."

Mr. Frog informed his family of his intentions. Mrs. Frog wept a great deal; but drying her eyes with her paper handkerchief, she tied up a little lacquered box full of boiled rice and snails, wrapped a silk napkin around it, and put it with his extra clothes in a bundle. He slung this on his back, seized his staff, and was ready to go.

"Good-bye," cried he, as, with a tear in his eye, he walked away.

Being now on dry land, out of his well, he noticed that the other animals did not leap, but walked; and, not wishing to be laughed at, he likewise began walking upright on his hind-legs.

Now it happened that about this time the frog of Ozaka had become dissatisfied with his life on the edges of the lotus-ditch. "Alas, alas! this is a dull life," said he. "If out of the mud can come the lovely lotus, why should n't a frog become a man? If my son should travel abroad, and see the world, — go to Kioto, for instance, — why should n't he become as wise as anybody? I shall try it. I'll send my son on a journey to Kioto."

Now you must know that the old frog from Kioto and the

young frog from Ozaka started each from his home at the same time. Nothing of importance occurred to either of them until they met on a hill half way between the two cities. Both were footsore, and websore, and very tired, on account of their unfroglike manner of walking.

"Good-morning," said the young frog to the old frog, falling on all-fours and bowing his head to the ground three times.

"Good day," replied the Kioto frog.

"It is rather fine weather to-day," said the youngster.

"Yes, it is; very fine," replied the old fellow.

"I am Lord Bullfrog, of the Lotus-Ditch of Ozaka."

"Your lordship must be weary with your journey. I am Sir Frog of the Well from Kioto. I started out to see the great ocean at Ozaka; but I am so dreadfully tired that I believe I'll give up my plan, and content myself with a look from this hill."

The young frog was tired enough to agree, and said: "Suppose we both save ourselves the trouble of the journey. This hill is half way between the two cities; and, while I see Kioto, you can get a good view of Ozaka and the sea."

Then both reared themselves on their hind-legs, and, stretching up on their toes, propped each other up, rolled their goggle eyes, and looked steadily, as they supposed, on the places which they wished to see.

As every one knows, a frog's eyes are in front when he is down, and at his back when he stands up. Long and steadily they gazed, until at last, their toes being tired, they came down again on all-fours.

"I declare!" said the old frog, "Ozaka looks just like Kioto; and, as for the great ocean, I do n't see any. I do n't believe there is any great ocean."

"For my part," said the youngster, "I am satisfied that it's all folly to go farther; for Kioto is as like Ozaka as one grain of rice is like another."

Thereupon they congratulated themselves on the lucky plan by which they had escaped so much weariness and danger, and after exchanging many compliments took leave of each other. Dropping again into a frog's hop, they leaped back in half the time, — the one to his well and the other to his ditch.

There each told the story of how both cities looked exactly alike. And to this day the frog in the well of Kioto knows nothing about the great ocean, and does not believe in it, and the frog in the ditch of Ozaka thinks all the world is exactly like his native city.

BOSTON BOYS

What! you want to hear a story all about that old-time glory,
When your grandsires fought for freedom against the British crown;
When King George's red-coats mustered all their forces, to be flustered
By our Yankee raw recruits, from each village and each town;

And the very boys protested, when they thought their rights molested.
My father used to tell us how the British General stared
With a curious, dazed expression when the youngsters in procession
Filed before him in a column, not a whit put out or scared.

Then the leader told his story, — told the haughty, handsome Tory
How his troops there, on the mall there (what you call "the Common," dears),

All the winter through had vexed them, meddled with them, and perplexed them,
Flinging back to their remonstrance, only laughter, threats and sneers.

"What!" the General cried in wonder, — and his tones were tones of thunder, —

"Are these rebel lessons that your fathers taught you, pray?
Did they send such lads as you here, to make such bold ado here,
And flout King George's officers upon the King's highway?"

Up the little leader started, while heat lightning flashed and darted
From his blue eyes, as he answered, stout of voice, with all his might:
"No one taught us, let me say, sir, — no one sent us here to-day, sir;
But we're Yankees, Yankees, Yankees, and we know that we are right!"

"And your soldiers, at the first, sir, on the mall there, did their worst,
sir;
Pulled our snow hills down we'd built there, broke the ice upon our pond.

"Help it, help if it you can, then!" back they answered every man then,
When we asked them, sir, to quit it; and we said, 'This goes beyond

"Soldiers' rights or soldiers' orders, for we've kept within our borders
To the south'ard of the mall there, where we've always had our play!"

"Where you always shall hereafter, undisturbed by threats or laughter
From my officers or soldiers. Go, my brave boys, from this day

"Troops of mine shall never harm you, never trouble or alarm you,"
Suddenly the British Gen'ral, moved with admiration, cried.

In a minute caps were swinging, five and twenty voices ringing
In a shout and cheer that summoned every neighbor far and wide.

And these neighbors told the story how the haughty, handsome Tory,
Bowing, smiling, hat in hand there, faced the little rebel band;
How he said, just then and after, half in earnest, half in laughter:

"So it seems the very children strike for freedom in this land!"

So I tell you now the story all about that old-time glory,
 As my father's father told it long and long ago to me;
 How they met and had it out there, what he called their bloodless bout
 there;
 How he felt — "What! was he there, then?" Why, the leader,
 that was he!

Nora Perry

SPRING'S IMMORTALITY

The buds awake at touch of Spring
 From Winter's joyless dream;
 From many a stone the ouzels sing
 By yonder mossy stream.

The cuckoo's voice, from copse and vale,
 Lingers, as if to meet
 The music of the nightingale
 Across the rising wheat —

The bird whom ancient Solitude
 Hath kept forever young,
 Unaltered since in studious mood
 Calm Milton mused and sung. . . .
 Ah, long ago new leaves and flowers
 Bloomed when the south wind came;
 While hands of Spring caressed the bowers,
 The throstle sang the same. . . .

Unchanged, unchanged the throstle's song,
 Unchanged Spring's answering breath,
 Unchanged, though cruel Time was strong,
 And stilled our love in death.

Mackenzie Bell

II

IDEAS AND RESPONSIVE CONDITIONS

VII. IMPRESSIONS AND BODY

Hark! Hark! hear the joyous robin!
 He is calling from the trees,
 "Come, O Sunshine! Come, O Breeze!
 It is time to wake the daisies
 And the bees."

Observe that even in the simplest process of thinking and expression, one full of gentleness and tenderness, there is a responsive effect upon the body. This effect is the first part of the response to thinking. What you think or feel moves you. The tones of the voice receive their fine changes from these quick, responsive actions in the body.

Imagine some extreme surprise, such as an explosion, and observe another effect of this upon the body. Such excitement tends to lift us from the earth, to bring us upon one foot, to move us upon the feet. The same is true of patriotism or aspiration.

THE SKATERS

Hurrah! Hurrah! Who cares for the cold?
 Winds are rough, but skaters are bold,
 Winds may blow, for skaters know,
 As over the ice so swift they go,
 Winds cannot worry them — let them blow.

There are Tom, John, Harry and Isadore,
 Jessie and Jane, and a dozen more —
 Tasks all done — away we run —
 And, of all forms of frolic and fun,
 There's nothing like skating, under the sun.

Then away, away, o'er the crystal floor;
 Away, away, from the reedy shore,
 Out of sight, like the flashing light,
 Curving neither to left nor right —
 Away, on our trusty steel so bright.

Here's the good old moon, with a kindly smile;
 Bless her round face, so friendly the while!
 We bravely dare the frosty air,



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